



The Sixty-fourth Season of  
The William Nelson Cromwell and F. Lammot Belin  
Concerts

National Gallery of Art  
2,544th Concert

Rita Bouboulidi, *pianist*

October 16, 2005  
Sunday Evening, 6:30 pm  
West Building, West Garden Court

*Admission free*

*This concert at the National Gallery of Art  
is made possible in part by a gift  
from The Charles Delmar Foundation*

## Program

Johannes Brahms (1833–1897)

*Two Rhapsodies* op. 79 (1879)

*No. 1 in D Minor*

*No. 2 in G Minor*

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827)

*Sonata no. 30 in E Major*, op. 109 (1820)

Vivace, ma non troppo

Prestissimo

Andante molto cantabile ed espressivo

## INTERMISSION

Franz Schubert (1797–1828)

*Fantasia in C Minor*, op. 15 (“Der Wanderer”) (1822)

Allegro con fuoco

Adagio

Presto

Allegro

## The Musician

In the course of her international career as a pianist, Rita Bouboulidi has appeared with the American Symphony Orchestra at Carnegie Hall, playing the New York premiere of Ned Rorem's *Piano Concerto*, with the Boston Symphony Orchestra, playing the Schoenberg *Piano Concerto*, and with the symphony orchestras of Baltimore, the Hague, Liège, Munich, Oslo, and Pittsburgh as well as the Philharmonia of London and the Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional of Mexico City. Eminent conductors with whom Bouboulidi has performed include Herbert Blomstedt, Sergiu Comissiona, Bernard Haitink, and Erich Leinsdorf.

Bouboulidi made headlines by performing the complete cycle of all thirty-two Beethoven sonatas in seven consecutive recitals in New York and Washington, a feat that she has repeated on ten other occasions in other cities. Among her recent recitals are appearances at the Athens Concert Hall, the Boston Atheneum, the Kennedy Center, and Wolf Trap as well as guest appearances at the Chopin Festival in the Czech Republic and the Bratislava Music Festival in Slovakia. This concert is her third at the National Gallery, following performances here in 1963, at the invitation of the Gallery's first head of music programs Richard Bales, and in 1988, at the invitation of his successor George Manos.

Born in Athens, Rita Bouboulidi graduated from that city's Conservatory of Music and Classical Lyceum. She continued her studies at the National Conservatory of Music in Paris. During her student years she won a premier medaille at the Geneva International Piano Competition. Her teachers were Nadia Boulanger and Edwin Fischer. Recordings of Bouboulidi's piano artistry have been produced on the Erato and Disques Charlin labels.

## Program Notes

Johannes Brahms was the rightful successor in the romantic era to Beethoven and Schumann. Under his able touch, the seemingly contradictory attributes of classical and romantic music come together—poetry with impeccable craftsmanship, classical forms clothed in multiple textures, and compositions of moderate length that, within a short space of time, plunge to expressions of deep despair and rise to breathtaking emotional heights. The majority of Brahms’s compositions for piano solo are shorter works like the rhapsodies in opus 79. These are mature works, composed after he had made his mark in every genre except opera, and they are free of the external trappings and superficial display of technique that appear in the works of such composers as Franz Liszt (1811–1886) and Max Reger (1873–1916)—and even in some works by the young Brahms. The rhapsodies and other short piano works of Brahms’s last twenty years are brief, reflective pieces in which lyricism, conciseness, and emotional experience merge for a fleeting moment. Like Brahms’s *Lieder*, these “songs without words” for piano present immensely varied contrasts in imagery and imagination.

The last three Beethoven piano sonatas stand as that great composer’s most intimate and movingly introspective keyboard works. They are so well known that they are often identified among music lovers simply by their opus numbers (opus 109, 110, and 111). The *Sonata in E Major*, op. 109, begins with a dialogue between two contrasting musical ideas, a theme marked *vivace* and an alternating passage marked *adagio*. The middle movement (*Prestissimo*) functions as a high-speed bridge between the two outer movements. In the last movement (*Andante molto cantabile ed espressivo*) Beethoven breaks all existing precedents by concluding a sonata with a theme and variations. This theme is one of the treasures among his many memorable melodies.

For Schubert's *Fantasia in C Minor*, op. 15, otherwise known as the *Wanderer Fantasy*, the composer took the melody from one of his own songs, "Der Wanderer," and expanded on it to create his most freely expressive piano work. Later rearranged for piano and orchestra by Liszt, this work is something of a departure for Schubert in that it openly exploits technical elements for dramatic effect and provides ample scope for virtuoso performances. Its four movements are unified by their relationship to the second movement (*Adagio*), the rhythmic patterns of which determine the basic rhythmic components of each other movement. In the finale (*Allegro*) thematic material from the other movements is presented in a fugue. Schubert is not usually thought of as a composer of fugues, but by 1822, when he wrote the *Wanderer Fantasy*, he had already written eight fugues for piano and incorporated fugues into more than a dozen sacred choral works.

For the convenience of concertgoers  
the Garden Café remains open until 6:00 pm.

The use of cameras or recording equipment during the  
performance is not allowed. Please be sure that cell phones,  
pagers, and other electronic devices are turned off.

Please note that late entry or reentry after 6:30 pm  
is not permitted.

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